

photoplay

MOVIES & VIDEO

THE CINEMA AND TV SCREEN MONTHLY

80p

**BURT
REYNOLDS
& GOLDIE
HAWN**

ARE *Best
Friends*
Special
report on their
new movie together

**THE VERDICT ON
PAUL NEWMAN
PLUS**

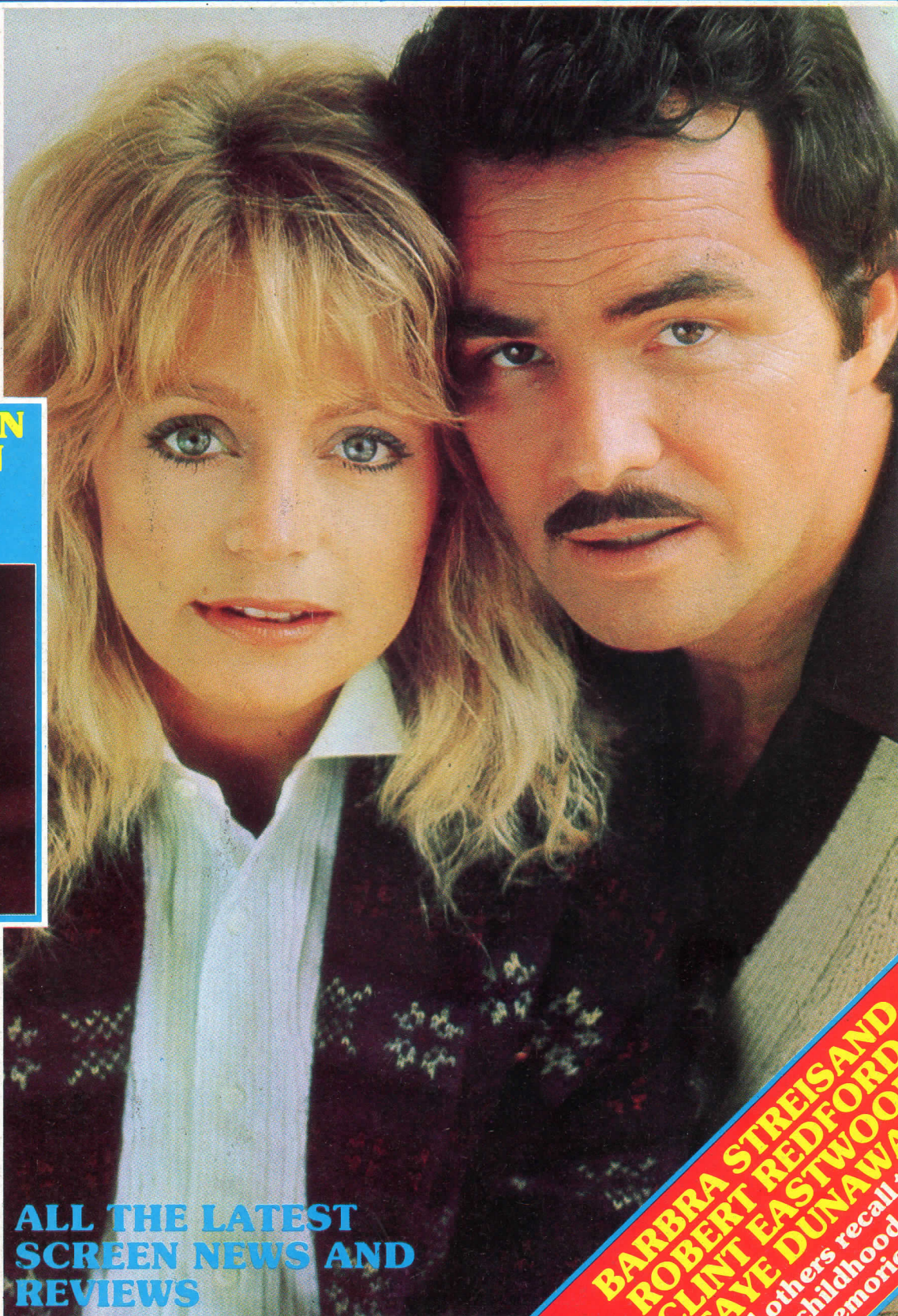
a Paul Newman
Colour Centrefold



**THE DARK
CRYSTAL**



A report on the screen's
latest fantasy movie

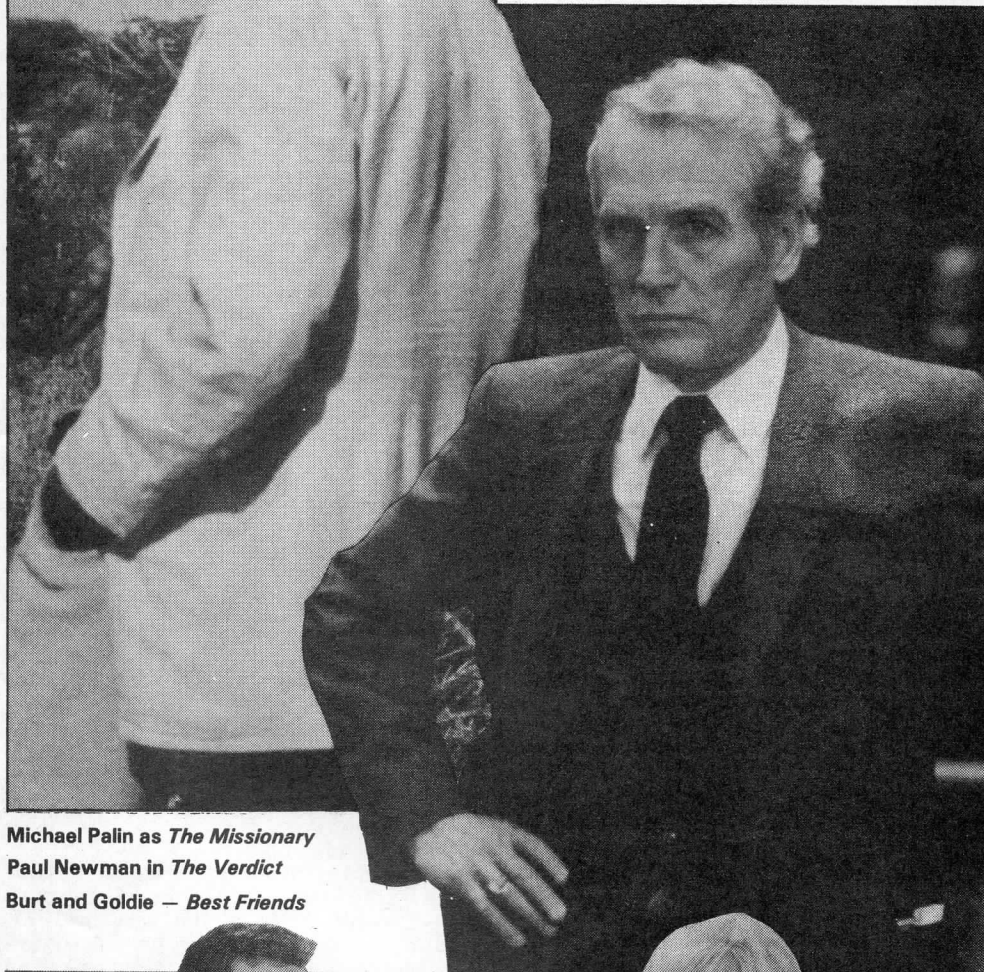


**ALL THE LATEST
SCREEN NEWS AND
REVIEWS**

**BARBRA STREISAND
ROBERT REDFORD
CLINT EASTWOOD
FAYE DUNAWAY**
and others recall their
childhood memories

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Paul Newman in *The Verdict*
Burt and Goldie — *Best Friends*



Movies Reviewed In This Issue:

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The Verdict • *Young Doctors In Love*
Party Party • *Privates On Parade*
Fighting Back • *Incubus* • *Eating Raoul*
The Man From Snowy River
Veronika Voss • *Airplane II: The Sequel*

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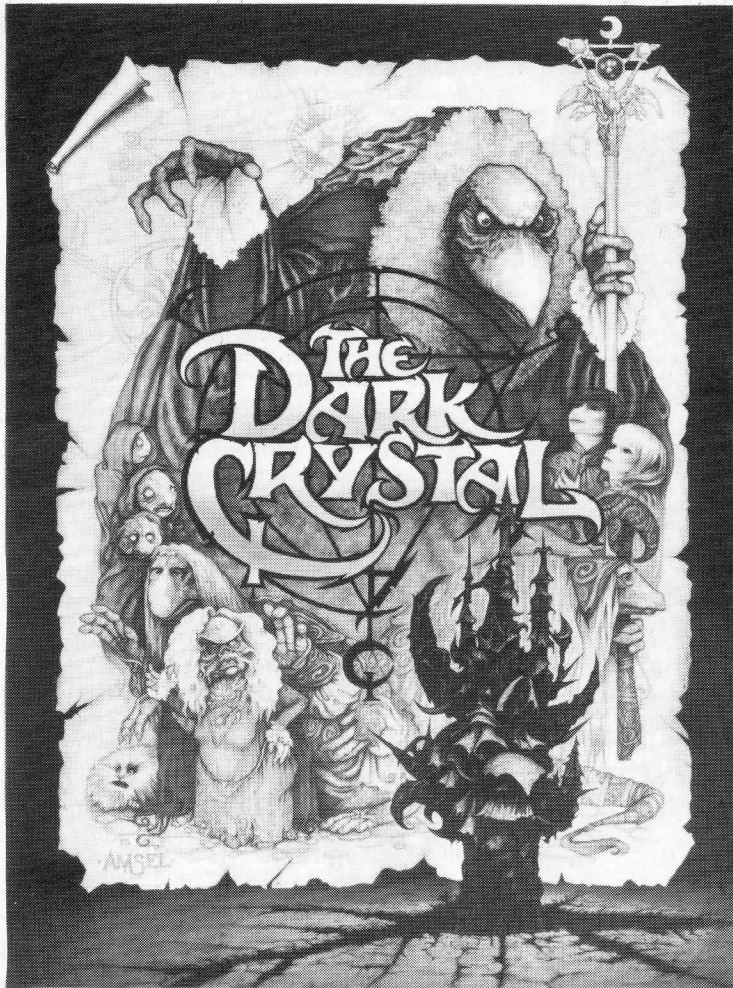
COVER: Burt Reynolds and Goldie Hawn in *Best Friends*; Paul Newman in *The Verdict* — photo: Barbara Walsh (Sygma); and a scene from *The Dark Crystal*

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Another World, Another Time...
In the Age of Wonder.

The DARK CRYSTAL

PG

LEW GRADE Presents for ITC ENTERTAINMENT

A JIM HENSON Film

"THE DARK CRYSTAL"

Directed by JIM HENSON and FRANK OZ Produced by JIM HENSON and GARY KURTZ

Screenplay by DAVID ODELL Story by JIM HENSON Music by TREVOR JONES

Conceptual Designer BRIAN FROUD Executive Producer DAVID LAZER

Director of Photography OSWALD MORRIS B.S.C.

Panavision® Technicolor® **DD** DOLBY STEREO™ **MP** Distributed by United International Pictures.

© HENSON ASSOCIATES INC. 1982

Available now three beautiful books: "World of the Dark Crystal" illustrated by Brian Froud. Published by Mitchell Beazley.
"The Dark Crystal" A novel with illustrations from Futura Publications. "The tale of the Dark Crystal" An enchanting picture book. From Macmillan Children's Book.

**FROM FEBRUARY 17 IN THE WEST END
AND ACROSS LONDON. ACROSS
THE COUNTRY FROM MARCH 31**

CINEMA SCREEN

D.C. — David Castell
D.Q. — David Quinlan
T.H. — Tom Hutchinson
M.G. — Marianne Gray
L.D. — Lisa Dewson
C.D. — Chrissy Denver

THE DARK CRYSTAL (U). In an unknown and mysterious world live the peaceful urRus and the evil Skeksis. One thousand years before the power of the Dark Crystal was cracked, and the world became a dark, decaying place. As the story begins, the conjunction of Three Suns is imminent, and if allowed to happen, will give total dominance to the Skeksis. An innocent Gelfling, Jen, is set a task by his dying master, the wisest of the urRus. He must find the missing shard from the Crystal, and return it to its rightful place before the Great Conjunction. Jen, who believes himself the last of his race, sets out on his quest, and finds Kira, a Gelfling girl, who has been raised by the simple Pod People. When, during a banquet with the peasant folk, the Skeksis attack and capture many of the Pod People, Jen's resolve is hardened and he and Kira set off once again to find the shard. From the makers of the Muppets, this is a delightful fantasy tale, filled with beautiful settings, and amazingly realistic 'puppet' characters. Muppet masterminds Jim Henson and Frank Oz teamed with producer Gary Kurtz (*Star Wars*; *The Empire Strikes Back*), and English artist Brian Froud, who worked as conceptual designer, along with many of the well-known Muppet performers. The soundtrack is rather loud, and some of the specially created dialogue is at times incomprehensible, but this aside, a marvellous film for both kids and parents. **C.D.**

Directors / Jim Henson, Frank Oz
Producers / Henson, Gary Kurtz
Screenplay / Henson
Photography / Oswald Morris, B.S.C.
Music / Trevor Jones
I.T.C. Films International
92 minutes

THE VOICES OF
Jen, A Gelfling JIM HENSON
Aughra, Keeper of Secrets . . FRANK OZ
Kira, A Gelfling . . . KATHRYN MULLEN
Fizzgig, A Friendly Monster
. DAVE GOELZ
The Scientist STEVE WHITMIRE
The Gourmand LOUISE GOLD

THE EXECUTIONER'S SONG (15). In this fairly interesting dramatisation of the last remaining months of real-life convict Gary Gilmore, producer-director Lawrence Schiller offers a distilled glimpse at the man who, having heartlessly committed two murders, in 1977 became the first criminal to be executed in America for ten years when he personally requested that his subsequent death sentence be carried out. The film opens with Gilmore having just been released on parole, and although he is



Jen, Kira and Fizzgig in *The Dark Crystal*

repeatedly told by family and friends that time is on his side, it's soon obvious that he is ill-equipped to make use of it. Unskilled and unable to adjust to a conventional lifestyle outside of the prison bars behind which he has spent more than half his life, once back in jail Gilmore opts for his only alternative to captivity with the casual statement that he deserves to die. His motive is neither clarified nor expanded upon, but presumably this was an area covered in more depth in the three-hour television version. Here, his challenge to the Utah Board of Pardons to stop being "Moral cowards" and fulfil his death wish,

merely sounds like a dare rather than an "intelligent waiver" of rights. Tommy Lee Jones gives a well-researched, sympathetic but unsentimental portrayal of the volatile convict, and while Rosanna Arquette (as Gilmore's 19-year-old girlfriend) is a natural scene-stealer displaying qualities reminiscent of Sissy Spacek, I found Christine Lahti ultimately more affecting in the role of his cousin Brenda. Norman Mailer's screenplay succeeds both in attempting to show as many sides as possible of Gilmore's complex personality, and in conveying the dramatic ripple-like repercussions that his actions had on those close to him. It is, perhaps, not surprising that this trimmed-down version of the original hops around rather abruptly in places, but a welcome bonus is the superb photography of Freddie Francis, whose camera roams eye-catchingly over scenic Utah locations. **L.D.**

Director-producer / Lawrence Schiller
Screenplay / Norman Mailer
Photography / Freddie Francis
Music / John Cacavas
Virgin Films
130 minutes

Gary Gilmore . . . TOMMY LEE JONES
Brenda Nicol CHRISTINE LAHTI
Nicole Baker . . . ROSANNA ARQUETTE
Vern Damico ELI WALLACH
Sterling Baker JIM YOUNGS
Larry Samuels STEVEN KEATS



Tommy Lee Jones with Rosanna Arquette in *The Executioner's Song*



The Dark Crystal

**Paul Wilson previews
the latest fantasy
adventure to spring
from the imagination
of Muppet creators
Jim Henson and
Frank Oz**

THE screen's latest fantasy epic, *The Dark Crystal*, finally comes to our screens five years after its original conception by Jim Henson, creator of *The Muppets*.

Through his muppet creations, Henson's creatures of foam and fabric have become tangible heroes to millions around the world. For *The Dark Crystal*, however, he had to invent an entirely different "look," so to interpret his ideas Henson brought in as conceptual designer Brian Froud, an English artist whose work the director felt was akin to his own vision of *The Dark Crystal's* world of fantasy.

They were joined by producer Gary Kurtz of *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back* fame, and co-director Frank Oz - premier puppet performer and Henson's longtime associate with the Muppets. The result of this artistic collaboration is a remarkable new visual experience and a creative work of sparkling originality.

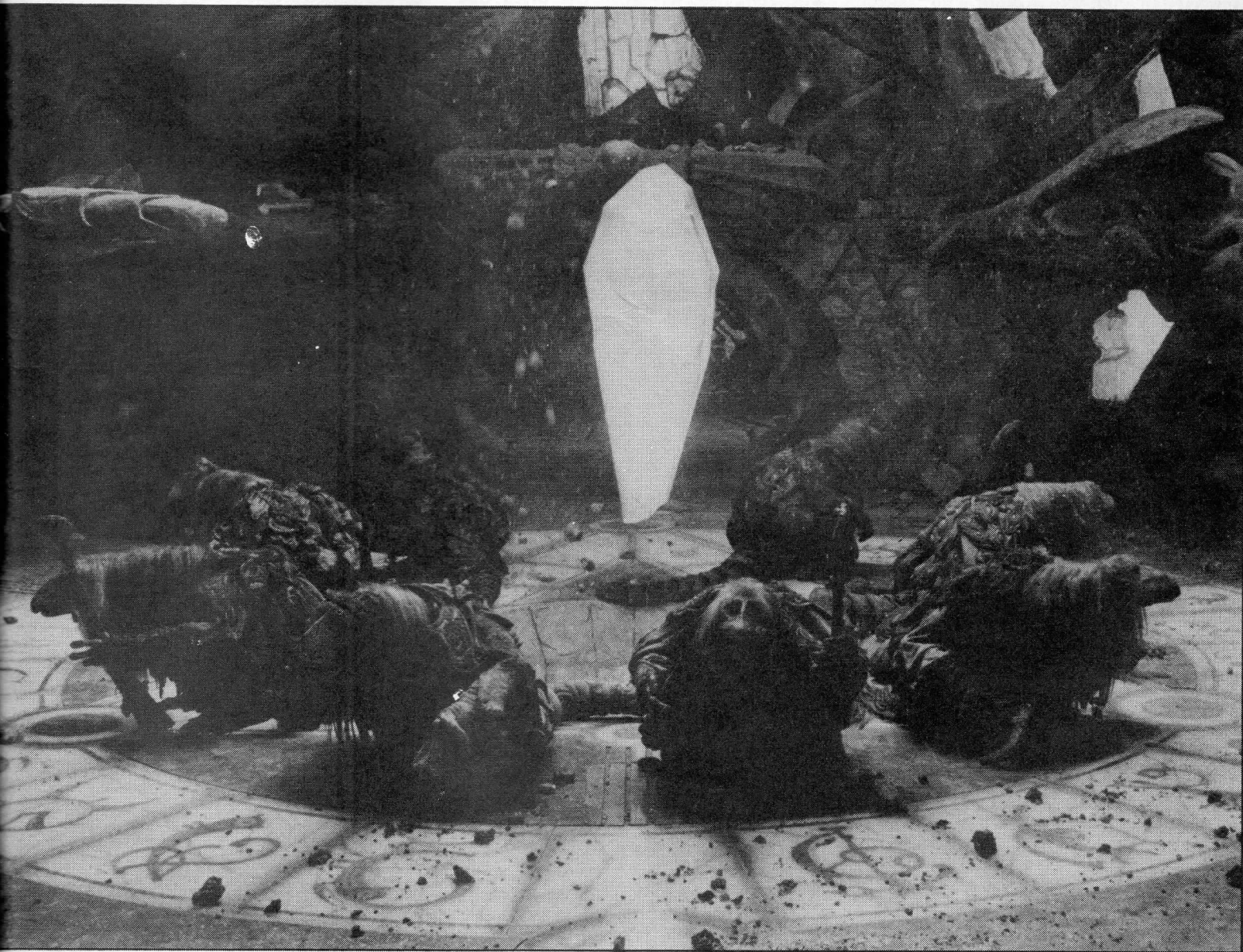
The story of *The Dark Crystal* is that of a land unplaced in time or space where a tribe of exalted thinkers and creators once ruled from a glittering castle in the heart of which glowed a great crystal with power gathered from Three Suns. However, following a mysterious convulsion which shook the world, The Crystal cracked and darkened: thus began the reign of an evil breed called the Skeksis. Dominated by greed and decay, gradually the castle, the land and its new rulers degenerated as the corrupted crystal became the key to the Skeksis' power and the centre of their strange rituals.

With their grotesque appearance and hideously twisted bodies, the Skeksis may well haunt the nightmares of more than a few children. They do, however, provide moments of comedy as they shriek and slobber over meal-time, and attempt to "catch" creatures destined to be dessert but which are still very much alive and constantly running around!

The castle of the Dark Crystal is guarded by Garthim, fierce warriors
(Continued overleaf)



Kira (holding her pet Fizzgig) and Jen, the two Gelfling who embark upon a mission to replace the missing shard belonging to the Dark Crystal. (Below) The urRu clan prepare for the Great Conjunction of the Three Suns in the film's climactic sequence





(Above) the female Gelfling Kira, (left) an urRu mystic displays his handiness at weaving

encased in shell-like armour who resemble a mixture of spider, crab and beetle, and who enforce the Skeksis' rule.

The hero of the film is Jen, believed to be the last surviving Gelfling, a race of elfin creatures that the Skeksis have tried to eradicate fearing that an ancient prophecy will come true and that the Gelflings will somehow destroy their ruthless power.

Plucked from the Garthims' claws as a young boy, Jen has been raised by the urRu, a clan of strange, four-handed mystics who, like the Skeksis, are few in number and must seek the power of the Dark Crystal to be certain of their sur-

vival. As urSu, wisest of the urRu lies dying, with his last breath he sets Jen the task of replacing the missing shard belonging to the Dark Crystal before the next conjunction of the Three Suns, so that goodness can be restored to their world through the subsequent light of the Crystal.

Wrenched from the tranquility of the valley of the urRu, Jen is thrust into an adventure filled with danger and excitement as he travels through an alien wilderness in a race against time in search of the missing shard of crystal. He finds it at the astonishing observatory of Aughra the astronomer, and

Keeper of Secrets. She teaches Jen something of his destiny before sending him on his way to the castle of the Dark Crystal.

Upon his travels Jen is amazed to meet another of his kind - Kira, a Gelfling girl who has been sheltered by the Pod People, an endearing crowd of simple peasants who live hidden in the depths of a forest. Looking like distant relatives of Miss Piggy, the fun-loving creatures live in terror of the Skeksis, who capture them in large numbers and transport them to the castle where they have their "life essence" drained out of them to become passive slaves.

As time runs out the urgency of the Gelfling mission increases. Determined to return the shard to the Dark Crystal, they race at incredible speed to the castle on curious, long-legged beasts known as Landstriders. As they approach the entrance to the castle, the peculiar disproportionate animals are forced into a vicious confrontation with Garthim guards, leaving Jen and Kira very little time left to complete their mission as the Three Suns are poised to form the Great Conjunction.

Whether they fulfil their ancient prophecy will be revealed to those who go and see the film. Children are sure to be entranced by the wizardry of the special effects and the creatures featured (especially Kira's fluffy pet Fizzgig) in this part-puppet, part-animation spectacle.

In this mystical world where the forests and swamps breed danger and mystery, where creatures strange beyond experience hop, crawl, scuttle and shriek in unknown languages, there is no reality (as we know it) either human or natural, yet in this absorbing and remarkable film, everything seems palpably "real."



The twisted features of Aughra, Keeper of Secrets and worldly astronomer